

# ATHEISTS EXPLOIT JESUS CRUCIFIED

The celebration of Hanukkah began on December 8, but fortunately for Jews they were not attacked by David Silverman. No, like other haters in the atheist community, the president of American Atheists saved his vitriol for Christians.

Silverman's latest assault was a huge billboard in New York's Times Square erected only three days after the start of Hanukkah. The message was neither new nor particularly offensive: "Keep the merry! Dump the myth!" What was offensive was the photo below a picture of Santa—it depicted Jesus with a Crown of Thorns on the Cross.

The decision by Silverman to exploit Jesus crucified as part of his annual attack on Christmas was not hard to explain. Two years ago, he ran a billboard on the New Jersey side of the Lincoln Tunnel that said, "You Know It's a Myth: This Season Celebrate Reason." We answered with a billboard on the New York side of the Lincoln Tunnel which read, "You Know It's Real: This Season Celebrate Jesus." Both the league and American Atheists actually had some fun with that exchange.

Last year Silverman's billboard outside the Lincoln Tunnel featured a picture of a statue of the Roman god Neptune, a classical portrait of Jesus, a depiction of Santa, and a guy in a devil's mask. It said they were all myths. When asked by the *New York Times* why he wasn't upset, Bill Donohue said, "It's inane. Nobody knows what this means. I mean, Neptune? Over here, we just looked at each other in puzzlement."

This year Silverman wanted to make a big splash, so he decided to draw blood. It showed what he is made of. He and his supporters do not want to be left alone—they want to inflame

the passions of those with whom they disagree. Unlike Christians who do not provoke, harass or otherwise mock atheists, Silverman and his ilk wanted nothing more than to stick it to Christians at Christmastime. It's who they are.